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I am writing to inform you of the Government's view of the position of Stafford College following the review by the Further Education (FE) Commissioner's team and the steps that will need to be taken to secure improvement at your college.

As you are aware, following an "inadequate" Ofsted inspection grading of the college in February 2016, I asked the FE Commissioner, Sir David Collins, to carry out an assessment of the college and this was conducted between 12 April and 14 April 2016. This has recently been supplemented by a further stocktake visit from the Commissioner team.

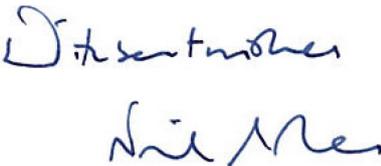
I agree with the FE Commissioner's recommendation that in line with the approach agreed through the Stoke and Staffordshire area review the college should actively pursue a Type B merger with Newcastle-under-Lyme College, with a view to passing over effective management control by 1 September 2016.

It is clear from the stocktake assessment that good progress is being made in responding to the Commissioner's recommendations, and in delivering the merger. This reflects well on your current leadership team and interim principal.

I have accepted all the FE Commissioner's recommendations and a summary of the assessment is provided with this letter. This document and my letter will be published on www.gov.uk in approximately two weeks.

Subject to continued successful progress of the merger I would anticipate that we can review Stafford College's intervention status at an early stage.

If you have any questions about the FE Commissioner's assessment or this letter please contact Karen Riley (karen.riley@sfa.gov.uk) at the joint SFA/EFA Intervention Team in the first instance.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Boles".

NICK BOLES MP